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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8244
INFO RUEHHS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI 0913
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2135
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 3371
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 2073
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS JAKARTA 000464

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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AIDAC

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/MTS, DS/IP/EAP, DS/DSS, INR/EAP and INL
DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS AID
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SUBJECT: Five Suspects Arrested in Aceh ex-GAM killings

REF: JAKARTA 446

¶1. (U) Summary. Five suspects were arrested on March 5 in relation to the March 1 killings of five ex-GAM members and injury of seven others during an attack on a KPA office in Central Aceh. TQ motive for the attack remains unclear and the police maintain the suspects are not ex-militia or members of any gang group. A key witness to the attack remains under KPA protection at an undisclosed location. Local officials have praised the swift police action while human rights NGOs have called for de-escalation and further investigation. The situation in central Aceh remains calm, but tense. End Summary.

Suspects Arrested

¶2. (SBU) Police arrested five suspects on the afternoon of Tuesday, March 4 in Atu Lintang village 30km southeast of Takengon city in Central Aceh. The suspects are all civilians named Marjono (age 29), Ahmed Sainuddin (age 32), Gimam (age 32), Musikan (age 42), and Humardi (age 70). Consulate Medan confirmed the names and status of the suspects with the Police Chief of Aceh Tengah Lt. Col. AB Kawedar on March 6. These suspects are now detained under close supervision at the Central Aceh Police Office. Tensions in the village and at the site of the attack remain high.

¶3. (U) Media reports from March 6 indicate police did not initially publicize the arrests due to the fragile situation in the district. Aceh daily Serambi reported that police commanders stated they received instructions from President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to conduct a clear and open investigation of the case and the police made the arrest public on March 5. Media reports added that a special team from Aceh Police Headquarters came to Central Aceh to support the investigation of the incident. Lt. Col. AB Kawedar would not speculate on motives for the crime during a conversation with Consulate Medan staff on March 6.

Motives Unclear

¶4. (U) The break in the case, according to police, came when suspect Musikan, who is also a local village chief, provided further information to investigators that led to the arrest and detention of the remaining four suspects. According to local authorities all of the suspects were born in Aceh. Police also conducted a

reconstruction of the crime with one of the injured victims from the March 1 attack. Police claim that the initial results of the investigation indicate all of the suspects are civilians acting of their own volition and initiative. They have denied any links to militias or any organization backing them in their actions. Police publicly maintain that a motive for the attacks is still unknown.

Reaction by KPA and Others

15. (U) Head of the KPA in Central Aceh, Ramdana, urged in a March 6 media statement that people not to be provoked by the incident, including a rumor subsequently disproved of the finding of 3 more dead bodies in Bur Lintang (10km from Atu Lintang). Ramdana assured the media on March 6 that all KPA members remain in their villages; however they remain alert because of this incident. A key witness who escaped the KPA office attack on March 1 is currently being "protected" by the KPA at an undisclosed location, according to both media reports and sources close to the KPA.

16. (SBU) Faudi Soni, head of the Aceh Post-Conflict Reintegration Body (BRA) in the city of Bireun and a source close to the KPA, told Consulate Medan staff on March 6 that in fact the Takengon bus station issue had been resolved on the evening of February 29 (reftel). After the attack on the KPA station in the early morning of March 1, however, Soni added KPA members were fearful the killings were instigated by those seeking to destabilize the province. Soni did not support a direct linkage between the struggle over control of the Takengon bus terminal and the March 1 attacks.

17. (U) The Head of the Aceh Provincial Peace Coordination and Communication Forum (FKK), Zainal Arifin, and the Provincial BRA Head, Nur Djuli, both praised the police in the media on March 6 for their quick action in detaining the suspects. Arifin added that he would bring this incident up in the FKK in order to follow up on the effect of the killings on the peace process and general stability in Aceh. Human rights NGOs in Aceh stressed that the local government and the authorities should take steps to ensure the de-escalation of the situation. Mr. Aziah, representing local NGO Kontras, also called on the Indonesian National Committee for Human Rights to investigate the recent violence.

Hume